

Claims

1. A method for transmitting pre-recorded images using telecom networks, whereby when telecommunications apparatus is used by a caller to send a message to a recipient, a supplementary image is visually transmitted from messaging equipment to the caller in addition to, or to replace, conventional connection messages.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein if, during transmission of the supplementary image to the caller, the telecommunications apparatus establishes a connection with the recipient, then the display of the supplementary image is terminated.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the supplementary image is transmitted to accompany a message text relayed to the caller so that if the telecom apparatus is not answered by the recipient during a predetermined time period, the image which the caller sees is replaced by the conventional message text.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein a message to be transmitted to the recipient from the caller is a mixed media audio/video message and, wherein a supplementary image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to connection between caller and recipient being established or prior to transmission of the message from the caller.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the image has an advertising and/or information content.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein a supplementary image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to connection between caller and recipient being established.

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7. The method of claim 1, wherein supplementary images are conveyed only to telecom system users who have indicated a willingness to receive such images.

10 8. The method of claim 1, wherein supplementary image insertion is available to all network service providers.

15 9. A method for transmitting pre-recorded images using a telecommunications network, in which a recipient of the transmission sees a pre-recorded supplementary image upon receiving transmission, the image being relayed, prior to connection between caller and recipient being effected or prior to transmission of a message from the caller.

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10. The method of claim 9, wherein in the case of text messaging, the supplementary image is placed before, after or in the text of the text message to the caller.

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11. The method of claim 9, wherein the supplementary image seen by the recipient is the same image as that seen by the caller.

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12. The method of claim 9, wherein a message to be transmitted to the recipient from the caller is a mixed media audio/video message and, wherein a supplementary

image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to connection between caller and recipient being established or prior to transmission of the message from the caller.

5 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the supplementary image seen by the recipient is the same image as that seen by the caller.

10 14. The method of claim 9, wherein the image has an advertising and/or information content.

15 15. The method of claim 9, wherein a supplementary image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to connection between caller and recipient being established.

20 16. The method of claim 9, wherein supplementary images are conveyed only to telecom system users who have indicated a willingness to receive such images.

17. The method of claim 9, wherein supplementary image insertion is available to all network service providers.

25 18. Apparatus for transmitting pre-recorded images using telecom networks, whereby when telecommunications apparatus is used by a caller to send a message to a recipient, a supplementary image is visually transmitted from messaging equipment to the caller in addition to, or to replace, conventional connection messages, wherein the
30 apparatus comprises: means for detecting a signal on a telecom system indicating that there is an incoming message transmission; and means for responding to this

detection by conveying a supplementary image or images to the caller.

19. Apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the apparatus
5 is arranged to insert a supplementary image or images into the message and relay the message with inserted supplementary image(s) to a recipient.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein in the case of text
10 messaging the supplementary image(s) is/are inserted in a part of a message from the caller and will be visible to the recipient on retrieval of the text message.

21. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein a message to be
15 transmitted to the recipient from the caller is a mixed media audio/video message and, wherein a supplementary image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to connection between caller and recipient being established or prior to transmission of the message from the caller.

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22. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the apparatus
comprises cellular/wired telecommunications systems and other terrestrial or satellite transmissions, or email
25 transmission systems capable of receiving text messaging.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the
telecommunications system is configured so as to convey such supplementary images only to system users who have
30 indicated a willingness to receive such images.

24. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the supplementary image also has an audible message associated with it and

transmitted to the caller during a predetermined time period.

25. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the predetermined
5 time period is selected by an advertising organisation.

26. Apparatus for transmitting pre-recorded images using
telecom networks, wherein a recipient of the transmission
sees a pre-recorded supplementary image upon receiving
10 transmission, the image being relayed, prior to connection
between caller and recipient being effected or prior to
transmission of a message from the caller, the apparatus
comprising: means for detecting a signal on a telecom
system indicating that there is an incoming message
15 transmission; and means for responding to this detection
by inserting a supplementary image or images into the
message transmission.

27. Apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the apparatus
20 is arranged to further transmit a supplementary image or
images to a caller.

28. Apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the apparatus
is arranged to insert the supplementary image(s) into the
25 message and relay the message with inserted supplementary
image(s) to a recipient.

29. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein in the case of text
messaging the supplementary image(s) is/are inserted in a
30 part of a message from the caller and will be visible to
the recipient on retrieval of the text message.

30. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein a message to be transmitted to the recipient from the caller is a mixed media audio/video message and, wherein a supplementary image is presented for viewing to the caller prior to
5 connection between caller and recipient being established or prior to transmission of the message from the caller.

31. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the apparatus
10 comprises cellular/wired telecommunications systems and other terrestrial or satellite transmissions, or email transmission systems capable of receiving text messaging.

32. The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the
15 telecommunications system is configured so as to convey such supplementary images only to system users who have indicated a willingness to receive such images.

33. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the supplementary
20 image also has an audible message associated with it and transmitted to the caller during a predetermined time period.

34. The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the predetermined
25 time period is selected by an advertising organisation.